2: Krige and Krige E-5 (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14



Generally speaking, a man's prestige increases as he grows older; but, on the one hand, as his age disables him, practical control gradually passes out of his hands, and, on the other, there is the conflict for position, mentioned elsewhere, between the old and the middle-aged in the royal family. A grand old man like Mavulana is more genuinely respected than the greatest of the royal councillors, and people humble themselves more graciously before him than before even royalty itself. But he lives far from the capital, some five miles over stony places and up a difficult hill, and it is not he, but his sons, who conduct the business of the district with the queen; and of them it is not the chief, but the eldest son, who started earliest on this business and is gradually establishing himself as the next head after the death of the father. In every walk of life, in the supreme councils of the queen, in the struggles for succession to headship of districts, among the wives of a polygynous household, among siblings in a village, the same phenomenon repeats itself. The society values age and experience, sagacity and diplomacy; the claims of age and seniority are validated in kinship terminology, in the precedences accorded the elder brother or sister with regard to priority of marriage or in the initiation ceremonies; but on the whole it is the values of the society rather than its institutionalizations which emphasize the importance of seniority. The society also stresses the hierarchy of rank, such as the status and rights of the chief son, the position of the great wife, and the pre-eminence of the cattle-linked sister, though she be the younger sister. But at the very core of the society there is uncertainty: the heir to the throne is not determined by rigid rules, based upon seniority or legal precedences, and the councillors are involved in a conflict which throws into confusion, at least, the principle of seniority. The total configuration of the society cannot wholly rely upon these devices without damaging the foundations of the sacred kingship. The uncertainty of the succession is the guarantee that the queens are queens by divine decree.

2: Krige and Krige E-S (1928-1939)1943
FX14 Lovedu FX14



769 What sort of person are you who do not live happily with your people?
182 To-day all your children have gathered here. They have come to see you
781 given corn. And to-morrow, when they depart, don't let there be a single one who remains troubled. Don't seize them, they are your children.' The difference between a spirit and the very old is not great, for an aged person is sometimes even referred to as 'our god' (*modimo wame*) and his displeasure during life may be 'seen in the dice' as the cause of illness or, after death, be avenged upon those who have angered him. An old wife of the queen, who had long been ailing, sent her a message saying, 'Unless you give me an liver, I'll never die, but keep on troubling people.' The queen, notoriously averse from slaughtering cattle for meat, nevertheless complied with this request, because it came from so old a woman.

769 Living relatives, even if not old, but because of the social implications
182 of their close relationship, may by conscious or even unconscious
753 (repressed) displeasure in their hearts cause illness. When Ramatiti's
766 daughter was about to set out for her new home, her mother, quite unexpectedly and without the previous knowledge of any one, took some water and squirted (*ku phasa*) it on the ground near the shrine, saying, 'You people of ours, I myself, mother of this girl, *phasa* lest they say I remained with a dissatisfied heart.' By intimating that she had no grievance, she tried to safeguard herself from being, at some future date, found in the dice as the cause of her daughter's barrenness. Unconscious grievances are recognised as working like our so-called repressed complexes. If the dice assign an illness, say barrenness, to a person who has no conscious complaint, he must nevertheless *phasa*, but his prayer will be, 'Don't say when you [the ancestors] smite her womb that it is I' (meaning, do not attribute your being 'stirred up' to dissatisfaction in my heart); or he may say, 'If it is I, let the child be well' (meaning, as I am unaware that I am the cause and do not wish to be, let the child recover). *Ku phasa* in these circumstances recognises psychological principles that have been clearly formulated only in the twentieth century. If one has a grievance one prays, 'Why is it that you rise up on my account? If it is I, I say, let them give me such-and-such a thing [e.g. beer of reconciliation] and you gods do not "be after" it' (cause further trouble about it).

781 As the gods have human attributes, 'worship' is not characterized by humility or formality. Even at the most important offerings you may find it difficult to catch the words of the officiator amid the talking and laughter of the onlookers. But you will probably hear him say, 'It is not water; truly it is beer', or 'It is not just *mahewle* (light beer); it is real beer', when he pours out flour and water and, you may see, as we once did, how he winks at his friends who smile at the deception. The asking of a favour from the gods with beer is patterned on everyday conceptions of reciprocity. You sometimes definitely state in your prayer, 'We give to you that you may give her [the patient] life.' Religion is cheerful; at the harvest offering the gods come to drink and be merry with you, and the idea of solemn communion with the gods for the uplifting of the soul, found in higher religions, is absent.

771 The relation of religion and morality is too large a subject for discussion here, for both concepts are different from ours. Their relation is not